2007-05399/

Ontario

Ontario Women's Directorate

NEWS RELEASE

August 15, 2007

MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT TRAINING TEACHERS TO HELP CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Teachers Given Tools To Identify And Support Students Witnessing Or Experiencing Domestic Violence

TORONTO – The McGuinty government is launching a new program that will train over 6,000 elementary teachers to recognize and assist children who are experiencing domestic violence at home, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues Sandra Pupatello announced today.

"Kids spend a large part of their days at school, so educators are in a unique position to offer assistance to children living in violent homes," said Pupatello. "We know that educators want to help, and now they will have the tools and training to do just that."

The government has invested $1.1 million to develop training materials for elementary school teachers, principals, and counsellors as part of the four-year Domestic Violence Action Plan. Training will be offered this fall and includes province-wide facilitators' workshops followed by local training sessions for educators. It is anticipated that over 6,000 elementary teachers will participate.

Resources will also be available to educators through a website, www.curriculum.org\womanabuse. A separate training program that has been developed for educators in Ontario French-language elementary schools will be available later this fall.

"Key to ending violence against women is involving professionals like educators who care and want to make a difference in children's lives," said Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne. "Our government thanks them for their ongoing commitment to the well-being of students."

"The Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario (ETFO) strongly endorses this initiative," said Emily Noble, president of the ETFO. "Any and every effort to prevent and stop domestic violence is important."

This funding is just one more example of how the McGuinty government, working together with community partners, has achieved results in preventing violence against women:

- Spending more than $190 million annually to provide violence against women services across government. This includes more than $82 million in new funding over four years to the Domestic Violence Action Plan to provide better community-based supports, implement public education and training strategies, strengthen Ontario's criminal and family justice systems response, and provide better access to French-language services
- Funding $5.9 million over four years for training, research and conferences to assist professionals in recognizing the signs of domestic violence and provide appropriate supports and referrals
- Launching the Equality Rules public education campaign, which teaches youth ages eight to 14 about healthy, equal and respectful relationships to help break the cycle of violence before it starts. For more information, visit www.equalityrules.ca

- Investing in the Neighbours, Friends and Families public education campaign, which provides information to help individuals recognize the signs of abuse and know what action to take. Public service announcements, a website (www.neighboursfriendsandfamilies.on.ca), brochures, a poster and wallet cards are available as part of the education campaign.

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Last Modified: August 15, 2007